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*Confidential Pamphlet*

CONTAINING

AN ESSAY ON CANVASSING, INSTRUCTIONS  
IN STENCIL CUTTING, INK RECEIPTS,  
ETC., ETC.

—BY—

**S. M. SPENCER,**

117 HANOVER STREET,

BOSTON, MASS.

MANUFACTURER OF

**IMPROVED STENCIL DIES,**

**KEY CHECK DIES,**

AND **STENCIL** AND

**Key Check Goods in Great Variety.**

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## A C A R D.

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In common with the most of our race I wish to live. And do not conceal the fact that my object in carrying on this business is to make money. I have a "weakness" for the comforts of life and its legitimate pleasures. But I desire, also, to confer a benefit upon others, especially those who have been induced by my representations to embark in the enterprise with me. I recognize our relationship and appreciate the responsibility. I acknowledge that Higher Power and the tie that binds all men in one common brotherhood. In view of this I would deal with all men honestly, would aid in spreading the cement of brotherly love, and work, as all should, by the square.

If these higher motives were disregarded, still the selfish one of "Honesty is the best policy," would prompt me to give to every man his due. My profits come only *second handed* from the consumer. My imprint is upon every copy of Ink Directions sent out, and upon each I *warrant* my wares. If there should be anything wrong write to me and it shall be corrected.

I would like to hear of your success in the business and hope you will write. I want to add to the hundreds of certificates and expressions of satisfaction already received. I hold myself ready to aid you all in my power and hope our business intercourse will be long, pleasant and profitable. Remaining

Yours Truly,

S. M. SPENCER,  
117 Hanover Street, Boston, Mass.

## Hints on Canvassing.

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It is impossible to state a particular course to pursue in *all cases*,—a canvasser having to adapt himself to the different persons and circumstances he meets with,—yet the general principles here laid down, I think, if carried into effect will guarantee *success*.

*First*, then, you must become satisfied that the business is *the right business for you*, and that you are *the right man* for the business; you must feel a lively, active interest in it, and *determine to succeed*.

Very much depends upon the personal appearance of the canvasser. It should be such as to favorably impress, from the *first* his desired patron. To this end he should maintain entire personal cleanliness. Should dress with becoming taste, but not foppishly, exhibit ease and naturalness in his deportment, be open and frank in his manners, direct but not too flagrant in his appeals and statements, and judiciously endeavor to inspire confidence in his character and representations. The canvasser or tradesman who holds the key to every individual's credulity possesses no mean qualification for success in his calling; while he who fails to gain general confidence can never rank high as a canvasser or salesman.

The canvasser should feel the nobleness of his calling, act as if he were conferring a benefit rather than asking a favor; avoid everything like crouching servility, which always degrades; with this *feeling* of nobleness, his appearance and language will not fail to produce that impression. He should observe the different "specimens of human nature," with which he comes in contact, adapting himself to the peculiarities of each, thus calling to his aid the important art of pleasing. Should you not meet with that success some days which has encouraged you on others, do not despair—let PERSEVERANCE be your watchword. As in all other business, so in Stenciling, there are some dark days; but never entertain an idea of giving up the business until you have canvassed two months at least, and you will by that time have no desire to quit the business; that handsome wages can be made with Stencil Dies will then be with you a knowledge. In entering a new place, always obtain, if possible, some of the most influential persons, of all sects and parties to head your list of subscribers, for their influence.

Some canvassers associate other articles with Stencils, to sell, and a *few* make their business pay better by so doing, but as a general rule such a course is not advisable, since complete success is seldom attained except by uniting one's entire energies and interests upon some one distinct business and following it; but if you do carry other articles, *never exhibit but one at a time*. The attention of the person

addressed should be concentrated upon one thing, until you have exhausted all hopes of succeeding with that; then try the other, whether you succeed with the first or not. A man cannot preach from two texts at the same time.

A canvasser should never ask, when he enters a house or shop, "Do you wish to subscribe for a Stencil plate?" for in more than half the cases, where a sale *might be effected*, the person thus addressed will reply, "No," for at the time it is not probable that such a desire did exist. *First show* your sample plates and impressions on cloth, &c., explaining the usefulness and conveniences of a plate for neatly imprinting their own name upon any article like clothing, books, cards, envelopes, etc., at the same time directing attention to some of your most tasty and generally admired patterns, and you will thus *create* a desire for the plate. Then show your subscription list, or impressions from plates you may have previously sold in the place, and in this manner your object can most generally be accomplished.

There is a fascination about one's *printed* name, and some of the most successful canvassers—when they find their desired customer is being interested—will cut his or her name, in the style they would be most likely to choose, and mark it upon paper in their book of samples. This seldom fails to win the customer and his *dimes*. Mr. Geo. H. Worden, of Prospect, N. Y., writes us that he has lost but *very few* plates in this manner. The best way to mark such samples is with your polishing brush—after scouring the plate. It will usually leave sufficient color, and, if nicely done, be very clear and distinct.

One objection a canvasser will meet with among a certain class of people will be in the price. There are some who will always find fault with the price of an article, no matter how low it is offered. If you were to *give* them a plate, they would want it marked upon all their books and wearing apparel, *free*. To such, reply that your prices are the regular standard prices of the trade. Again, some may say that they have had plates offered them cheaper than yours. Reply, "That may all be true, but would you not rather have a good article at a fair price than a poor one at half price? A stencil plate cut with tools that make rough, uneven, ill-formed letters, accompanied with a bottle of *lump-black and tar*, is dear at any price, while the *reverse* is true of a plate cut with tools, which, like mine, make well formed, smooth and even letters, together with a bottle of *indelible ink*." Then add: "No one furnishing good articles thinks of selling them for less than my prices, while my Stencil plates are of superior copy-right designs."

To succeed in schools, first get the good will and influence of the Teachers; in factories and shops, that of the over-

seers or foremen.—This can usually be accomplished by first presenting to the teachers or overseers neatly gotten up plates for their individual use, stating your object to be a proper influence of trade. These plates should be of the styles you are the most desirous of selling, as many will be led to select the same style as their teacher or overseer.

In canvassing factories, shops, &c., be quiet, and take great care not to hinder the employees. Among farmers, take more time and appear more at leisure than in villages and cities, and always manage to pay your expenses in your Stencil work, or articles for sale. Among merchants or tradesmen, work leisurely or business-like, according to circumstances, but never seek the time or attention that belongs to their customers, since such apparent effort might cause your presence to become disagreeable and materially lessen your chances of success.

In securing business orders, the advantages of a Stencil plate for marking upon surfaces where printing cannot be done, should be made clear.

At Fairs, or other public occasions, secure a stand in the most conspicuous place possible from which to cut the plates and cry for orders. The novelty of seeing Stencils cut will always attract a crowd. Upon these occasions a well drawn up handbill, judiciously circulated, is often valuable. Some ancient costume or unique article of dress is occasionally resorted to to attract attention.

A thorough knowledge of human nature is very essential to the canvasser, that he may read the thoughts, observe the peculiarities, and enter into the feelings of the person he has to deal with; thus he will be enabled to touch at once upon the particular cord that shall awaken in them an interest for him, and then naturally follows an interest in his business, which is the object sought. To this end, manifest an obvious but not *over apparent* interest in the particular calling or surroundings of your desired patron. Easy and ready adaptation to circumstances, is an important art in canvassing, and should be made the constant study and practice of every beginner.

TO RECAPITULATE.—Scour your sample plates bright every morning, and keep your canvassing book and samples neat and clean. Be always good-natured, and endeavor to keep your patrons in a similar mood. Adapt yourself with ease to the different men and circumstances you meet. Maintain fair and regular prices. Always start a list in any town or section with prominent influential persons if possible. Always *be present with your samples*, that you may take advantage of first favorable impressions.

After, all, much will depend on the *tact* and *energy* of the canvasser, and he must be persevering and systematic; go-

ing at it as he would do a day's work, losing no time; otherwise no matter how skillful he may be, his efforts will not be attended with complete success.

**LOCAL BUSINESS.**—There are two ways of conducting a local Stencil business successfully:

1st. By opening a shop at any point desired, and systematically advertising through the Press for work, executing your orders and sending the small plates by mail and the large ones by express. A first-class business can in this way be readily established by an energetic person.

2nd. Employ two or three first-class canvassers to obtain orders, cut their plates, furnishing ink, brushes, etc., for half the retail price. This makes a very neat business, it being a kind of wholesale trade—you dealing only with your agents.

**THE BEST TERRITORY.**—I am often asked, "where is the best place to sell Stencil plates?" I always reply: *Begin right where you are and work your way abroad.* The fact is, there is infinitely less difference in territory than is generally supposed. The difference is in *canvassers* and the *quality* and the *variety of tools* used. A good canvasser with a variety of good tools will seldom find occasion to complain of "poor" territory or want of success.

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### *Directions for Cutting Stencil Plates.*

Cut the plate lengthwise of the brass or silver, about half an inch larger than your frame. Place your pattern on the brass in the right position, fastening it under the gauge, place bottom of your die against the pattern and strike it through the plate. If a letter comes below the line, like g, p, &c., leave a space and strike it through after you have removed the gauge and pattern. Beginners will find it much easier to cut a good plate by a curved line than by a straight one as a slight variation from "trueness" will not be observed in the curved design. In cutting large plates or those where you cannot use the gauge, rule a line on your brass with a pencil. Sit facing the light, with the line on the plate running from you, then you can set the dies true above your guide line. Take the case containing the dies, from the trunk, and place it within convenient reach; have your "Copy" before you and estimate about the space it will require. In cutting "business" cards it is well to draw a line at right angles with the guide line, in the centre of the plate, count the letters in the middle line and beginning with the center letter cut each way, then cut the upper and lower lines, working from the center.

In cutting name plates begin with the first letter in the name. See that your plate lays over a smooth part of your



block; take the die in your left hand, place the bottom against the zinc pattern, and strike the die a sharp, quick blow with the hammer. All the skill required is to get the spaces between the letters equal, which can be done with a little practice. When the name is cut, if you wish for a border, select the flowering tool to be used in the center, and cut *corresponding parts* before you replace the tool. Always put the dies in their proper places when you are through. After you have finished the border, put in the periods where they belong, and find all right by looking through it toward the light. Pick out any little piece of brass that may remain with the point of a pen-knife. Turn the plate over on your zinc finishing plate, and with the smoothing-stone, grind off the burr, rubbing over it very lightly at first, so as not to break through any of the letters. Then with the framing chisel, rub the plate down perfectly smooth and flat, and it is ready to frame.

To frame your plate, place the frame on the back side, clip the corners of the plate close to the frame, then with the framing chisel turn the edges of the plate over the edges of frame and rub them down tight. Sink the *face* of the plate into the frame with the rubber countersinker, by placing the rubber on the face side of the plate, while it lays on your zinc finishing plate, or some smooth, solid surface, and strike it several blows with your hammer. This will sink it into the frame perfectly, without leaving any scratches on the brass. Polish the plate by rubbing with the polishing brush and powder. The grit which wears from the smoothing stone answers a good purpose for polishing.

The block when cut over should be rendered smooth again by scraping it with the block buffer, or it may be rasped, planed or turned smooth. Seasoned rock maple, hickory or any common hard tight-grained wood can be used instead of lignum-vitæ, for the large dies. Blocks of lead are sometimes used to cut small plates on, but it wears the sharp corners of the dies more than wood. The corners of the dies will become worn off in time, (though they are made of the best cast steel,) and the dies need refacing; which is done by polishing with a hard fine grain oil-stone. Great care must be taken to get the face of the die true and square.

TO CUT ANY OF MY DESIGNS, paste the pattern upon your plate, (or with special care you can hold the pattern in place by turning the corners of the plate over upon it) cut the name through the paper and plate where the letters are in the pattern, then cut the ornamental work with the proper border tools, they being clearly indicated by their shape on the pattern.

Any boy who can drive a nail ought to be able to copy my designs. He will also find a field here to exercise his ingenuity and cultivate his taste and genius. Birds, flowers and even human faces have been quite accurately copied by stencil cutters.

RETAIL PRICES for plain name plates are 50 cents. For plain name and residence, 75 cents. Ordinary flowered plates, 75 cents. Corner plates, the Cross, Swan, &c., should command \$2.00 to \$3.00 each. Business plates, cut with small dies, usually sell for three or four cents a letter. The above of course includes one bottle of ink, one brush, ink directions, and with some stencil cutters, a small, neat box to put them in. Indelible ink retails for 25 cents per bottle.

TO CUT BRANDS WITH LARGE DIES use a hammer weighing about 2 lbs. Place two or three thicknesses of old newspapers upon the lignumvitæ block (or as has been intimated, it may be of maple or any seasoned hard wood,) lay your plate upon the paper, on the *end of the block*, one or two smart blows upon the die will cut the brass or copper plate.—Flatten the plate between two pieces of zinc or with a wooden mallet. Brands sell for about 6 cents per letter. A box of mercantile ink at 25 cents extra, and a brush for 25 to 40 cents. Many farmers use a common boot brush and apply common blacking on wood surfaces. For their grain bags they use *wheel grease*, as it does not wash out easily. Oil the face of your dies occasionally with sperm oil.

BRONZE.—To bronze books, cards, &c., mark the name with ink as usual, only use as little ink as possible, and have it mark plain; and after removing the plate, brush over a small quantity of the bronze with the camel's hair brush.

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## RECEIPTS.

It is sometimes convenient and desirable for you to make your own ink; as a general rule, however, you will find it more expensive to put it up yourself than to send to me for it. I make it in large quantities, and can therefore make it cheaper. Most Stencil Cutters prefer to buy it.

I have found the following receipt, bought of a New York chemist at an expense of \$25, reliable, and with care in making will produce

A PERFECTLY INDELIBLE INK.—Dissolve 1 lb. pure Sulphate of Iron, in 1 1-4 lb. Acetic Acid; add 1 lb. Precipitated Carbonate of Iron and stir till they combine. This should be done in an iron kettle over a slow fire. Then put

in 3 lbs. Printers' Varnish, 2 lbs. fine Book Ink and stir till well mixed. To complete, add 1 lb. Ethiops Mineral, finely sifted. This will fill nearly 1000 drachm vials.

**ANOTHER RECEIPT.**—This should be made in an iron kettle but not heated. Dissolve 1 lb. pure Sulphate of Iron in 2 1-2 pints of soft water. Put 1 qt. spirits of Turpentine with 5 lbs. lithographic Varnish, stir till they unite, then add this to the solution of Iron and stir the whole till they are thoroughly combined. Sift into the mixture 2 1-2 lbs. Ethiops Mineral, and a sufficient amount of Ivory Black to thicken suitably—about 1-2 lb.

**RED INK.**—Or more properly paint, may be made by mixing Vermillion red with boiled Linseed Oil and spirits of Turpentine to any thickness desired.

**BLACK DRY INK.**—For marking on wood, paper or other surfaces where indelibility is not required. Mix equal parts of Lampblack and Ivory Black with a sizing made of Glue and Brown Sugar—a very small proportion of Glue should be used. Make the mixture into a thick paste and cake, or pour it into boxes while hot, in a day or so it will become hard, ready for use. Moisten your brush and rub it over the cake, and a sufficient amount of Ink will adhere to make a good impression through the stencil plate.

**BLUE DRY INK.**—Two parts English Whiting to one of Ultramarine blue, mixed with sizing the same as for black, and put up and used in like manner.

**GREEN DRY INK.**—Equal parts of Whiting and Brunswick Green, mixed with sizing the same as for Blue and Black.

**RED DRY INK.**—Mix 2 parts of Whiting and 3 of American Vermillion with sizing, as for other colors, and put up in the same way.

The shades of color in the above dry Inks can be varied to suit your taste. All should be used dry, i. e., not mixed with oil, as prepared and sold in the shops for painting purposes.

**WATER PROOF BLACK.**—For marking on canvass or wood where exposed to the weather.—Mix Lampblack with boiled Linseed oil, add Asphaltum varnish, and if necessary, Spirits of Turpentine to thin down to a proper consistency for use.

**SILVER WASH.**—For Silvering metal *temporarily*. One ounce Nitric acid, one ten cent piece (Scrip won't answer the contract,) and one ounce Quicksilver; put them in an open glass dish—in the *open air*—and let them stand till dissolved. (Avoid breathing the vapor arising from it as it is poisonous.) Add a pint of water and it is ready for use. To make a **SILVER POWDER**—add Whiting to the solution

as above. Sometimes it is desirable to give a temporary finished appearance to a stencil-plate or other metallic articles, which can very readily be done by rubbing it with this powder. We by no means advise you to use it on the plates you sell unless you explain to the parties its inconstant nature. Occasionally this powder is carried by stencil cutters for sale, and a very good use is made of it by house-wives in cleaning Britannia and plated ware which has become worn. Silver ware is made to look very bright and new by its use.

**A STRONG GLUE**, which will hold a strap on your boot, or mend a broken trace to your harness. Take pure soft water 1-2 pint, dissolve 3 oz. best White Glue, then 1 oz. Shred Isinglass in it. Add 1-2 drachm gum Shellac, cut in a 1 ounce vial of Alcohol, and stir in one ounce of White Lead ground in 1 ounce of alcohol. Pour into vials while hot and keep corked tight when not in use, to prevent the escape of the alcohol. This is really a valuable article and is worth what it cost (\$10.) It is almost insoluble in water and amazingly strong. Take two common thread spools and stick them together end to end, let the glue dry well, then break the spools apart—if you can. It must be melted by warming the bottle, when used.

**A RECIPE FOR JAPANESE CEMENT.**—One half pint of Alcohol, Half pound White Glue. One fourth pound White Lead. Three ounces American Isinglass, or Fish Glue. One teaspoonful Spirits Camphor to one quart soft water. First dissolve the Glue and Isenglass in the water, but not boil; then add the Lead, then the Alcohol and Camphor, and it is ready to bottle.

**PLEASE NOTICE.**—I cannot send goods and collect the full amount on delivery. I would gladly accommodate, but my profits do not warrant the risk; as in case the goods are not taken I am obliged to have them returned, and pay the express charges both ways, which is a dead loss. I will sell you as cheaply as possible, but I must be secured on express charges before I ship the goods. Send me \$5, which will be deducted from your bill, and the balance will be collected if preferred. It is better to send the whole amount when ordering goods, as it saves you the expense of collecting and returning the money by express. I think that the certificates given are sufficient to convince you that I am entirely responsible for any amount entrusted to me.

ADDRESS,

**S. M. SPENCER,**

*117 Hanover Street; Boston, Mass.*

## Testimonials-

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BOSTON, Sept. 1, 1873.

I have known Mr. S. M. Spencer intimately for the past fifteen years, and cheerfully bear testimony to his integrity, financial responsibility, and his thorough practical knowledge of every department of the Stencil business. From my former long connection with the Stencil business, I am able to see the vast superiority of his Stencil Dies over any other make I have ever seen.

D. L. MILLIKEN,

New England Agent for T. S. Arthur & Son, Publishers.

BOSTON, MASS., March 13, 1873.

Having had a business acquaintance of several years with S. M. Spencer, it affords me much pleasure to certify that in all our transactions I have invariably found him prompt, reliable, and trustworthy.

HORACE DODD,

Advertising Agent, 121 Washington St.

JUNE 1, 1870.

I have known Mr. S. M. Spencer, of this village, both in a business way and in the ordinary routine of society, and have found him, in all intercourse I have had with him, to be an honest, honorable and upright man, and in every way worthy of the confidence and esteem of his patrons.

GEO. S. DOWLEY,

Cashier of the Vermont National Bank, of Brattleboro.

BRATTLEBORO, VT., June 1, 1869.

It gives me pleasure to bear witness to the character of S. M. Spencer, as a gentleman of strict integrity and fair dealing. His stencil outfits have a wide reputation for superior excellence.

WILLIS BEMIS,

Agent Am. M. U. & Fisk & Co's Express.

JUNE 1, 1870.

It is my pleasure to bear testimony to the character of S. M. Spencer, as a gentleman of integrity and worthy of the patronage and entire confidence of the community.

WILLIAM S. NEWTON,

Town Clerk of Brattleboro, Vt.

BRATTLEBORO, June 1, 1870.

From long personal and business acquaintance with Mr. S. M. Spencer, we do not hesitate to express our entire confidence in his integrity and responsibility.

CHENEY & CLAPP,

Booksellers and Stationers.



## GENERAL

**Advantages of the Stencil Business.**

1st. The employment is light, neat, pleasant, healthy, useful.

2nd. It is founded permanently upon the private wants of every individual, and the business wants of every community.

3d. It is subject to no license, taxation, or high rents.

4th. In it you will be pushed by no local competition, subject to no man's shop-bell, with the widest, freest field for trade and travel.

5th. It involves no costly investment of time or money, as three hours practice will teach you the business, and from \$25 to \$50 capital establish you in it.

6th. If you are wide-awake, it will pay you from \$5 to \$20 a day, whenever and wherever you may follow it.

7th. It pays to have a Stencil outfit, even for occasional use, as it brings in large profits when in use, is kept without expense when not in use, and is at any time as saleable as a watch or a horse.

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**NOTICE.**

Stencil Goods may be sent by mail with the exception of Ink, (all liquids being excluded from the mails by Post Office laws,) in packages of 12 ounces or less, at the rate of 2 cents for every two ounces; but will invariably be sent by express unless money be sent with the order to pay postage, besides paying for the goods, and will be sent at your risk.